



(12) **United States Patent**  
**Igarashi et al.**

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 9,274,254 B2**  
(45) **Date of Patent:** **Mar. 1, 2016**

(54) **OPTICAL ELEMENT ARRAY,  
PHOTOELECTRIC CONVERSION  
APPARATUS, AND IMAGE PICKUP SYSTEM**

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(\*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this  
patent is extended or adjusted under 35  
U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

(21) Appl. No.: **14/508,839**

(22) Filed: **Oct. 7, 2014**

(65) **Prior Publication Data**

US 2015/0097996 A1 Apr. 9, 2015

(30) **Foreign Application Priority Data**

Oct. 9, 2013 (JP) ..... 2013-212298

(51) **Int. Cl.**  
**H04N 5/369** (2011.01)  
**G02B 3/00** (2006.01)  
**H01L 27/146** (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**  
CPC ..... **G02B 3/0037** (2013.01); **H01L 27/14627**  
(2013.01); **H01L 27/14643** (2013.01); **H04N**  
**5/369** (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**  
CPC ..... G02B 3/0037; H01L 27/14627; H01L  
27/14643; H04N 5/369  
See application file for complete search history.

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

An optical element array includes a first optical element and a second optical element that is further away from a center of an array region than the first optical element. Orthogonal projections of the first and second optical elements include first and second ends and third and fourth ends, respectively, and vertices thereof are at first and second positions. An interval between the third end and the second position is smaller than that between the first end and the first position and that between the fourth end and that second position. The first and second optical elements respectively include first and second outer edges extending from the vertices thereof to the second and fourth ends. A radius of curvature, or a median value of the radius of curvature, of the second outer edge is in the range of 80% to 120% of that of the first outer edge.

**20 Claims, 9 Drawing Sheets**

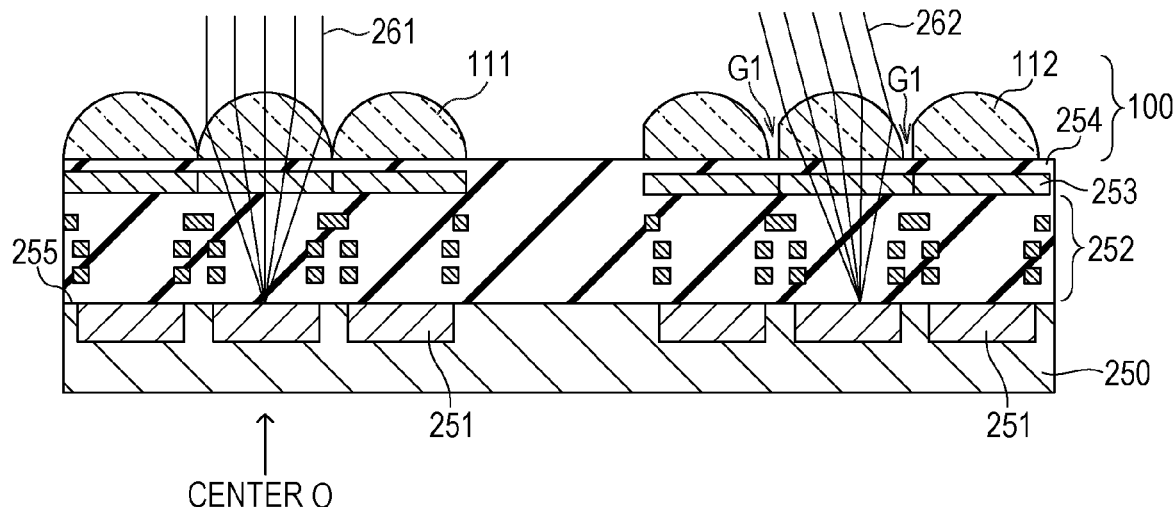


FIG. 1

100

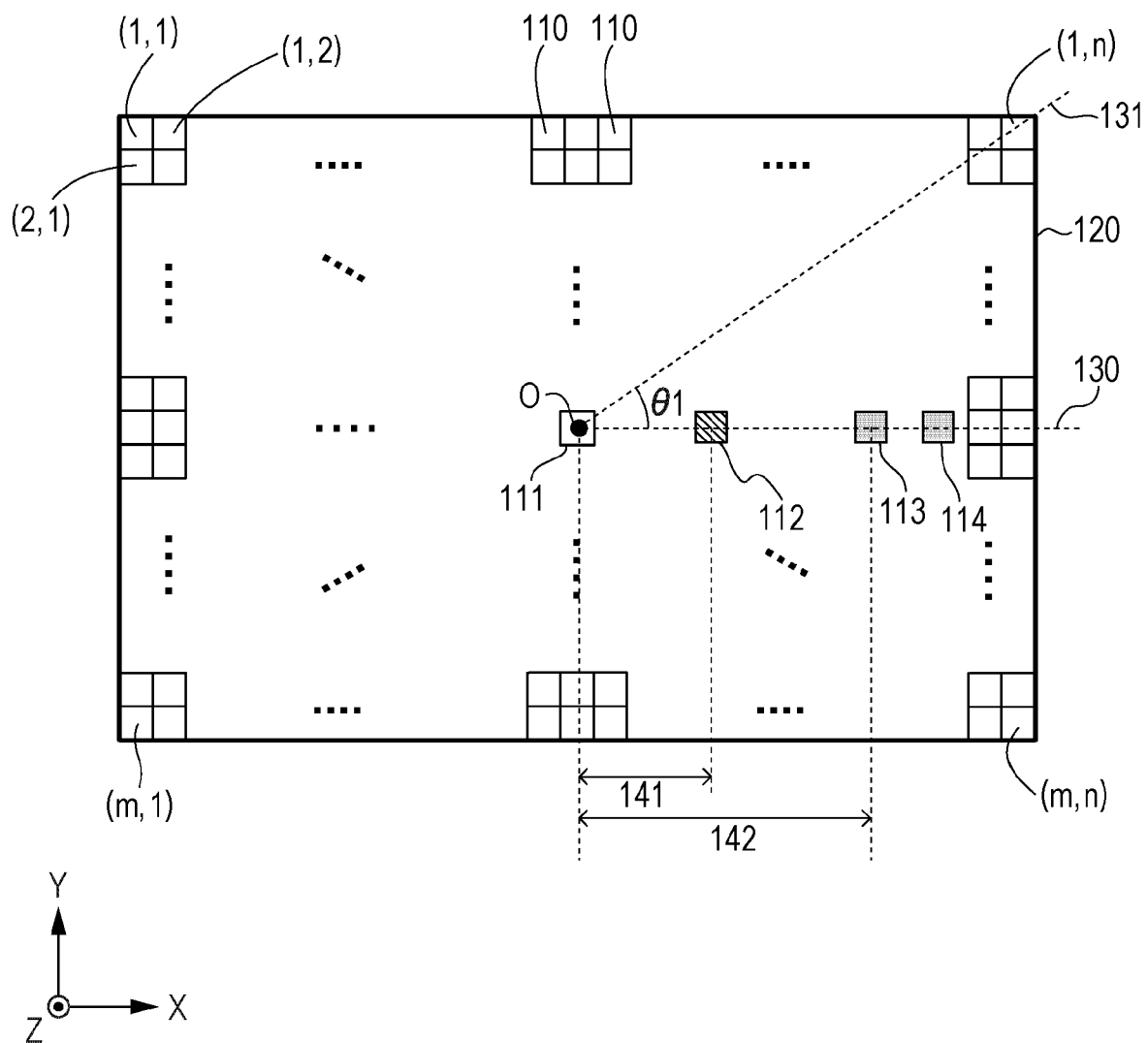


FIG. 2A

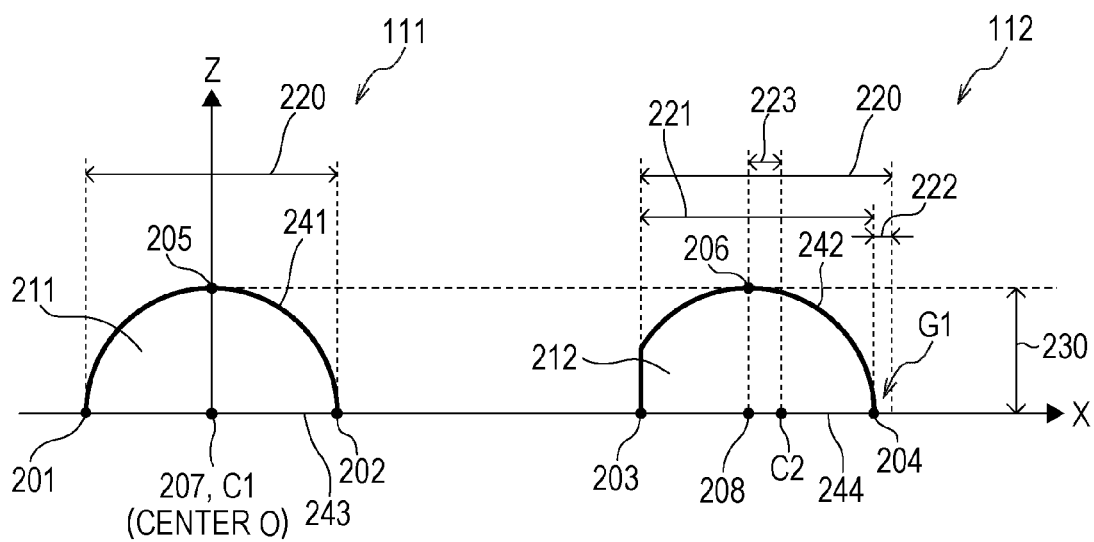


FIG. 2B

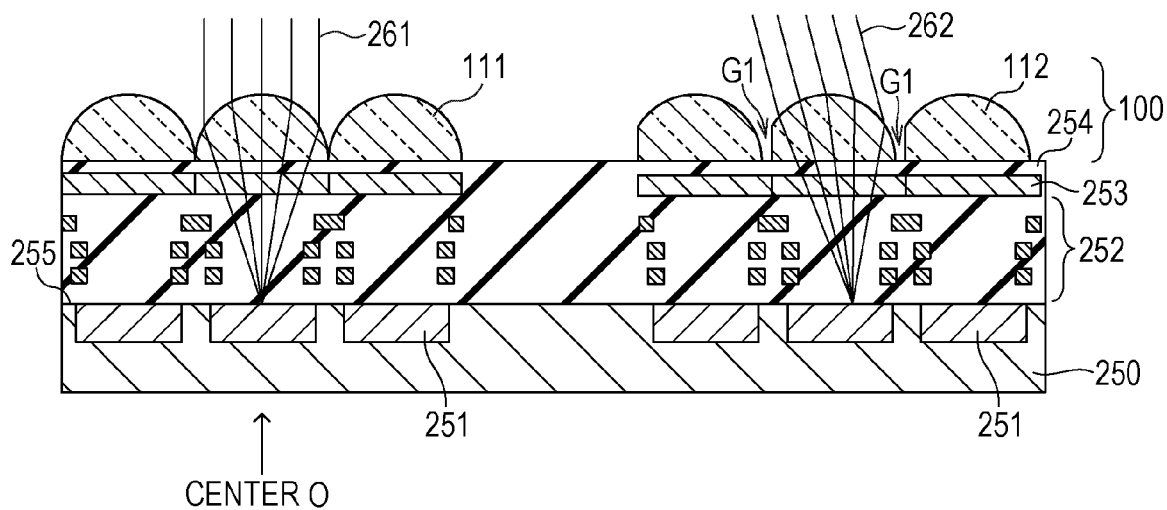


FIG. 3A

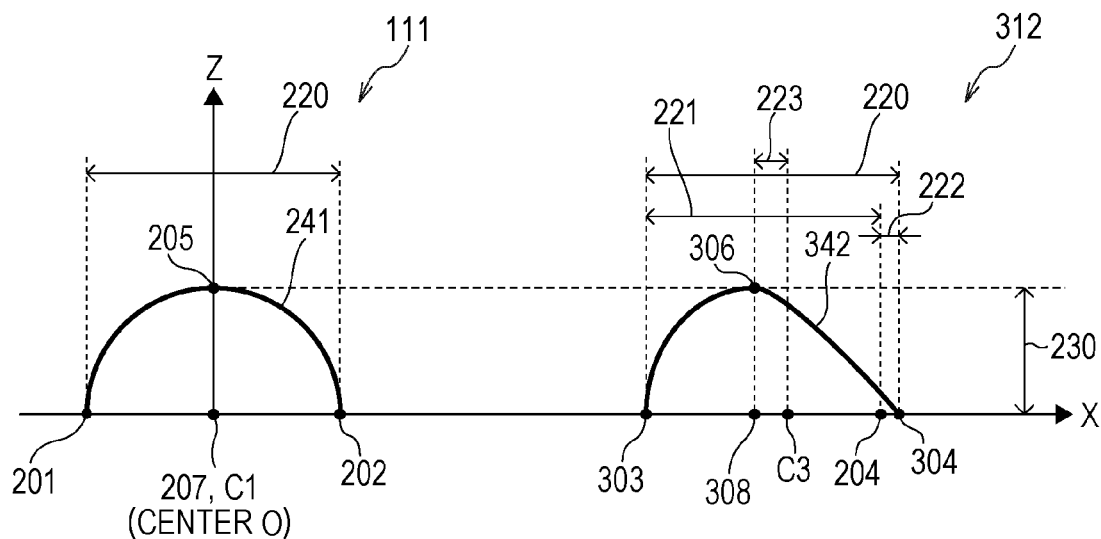


FIG. 3B

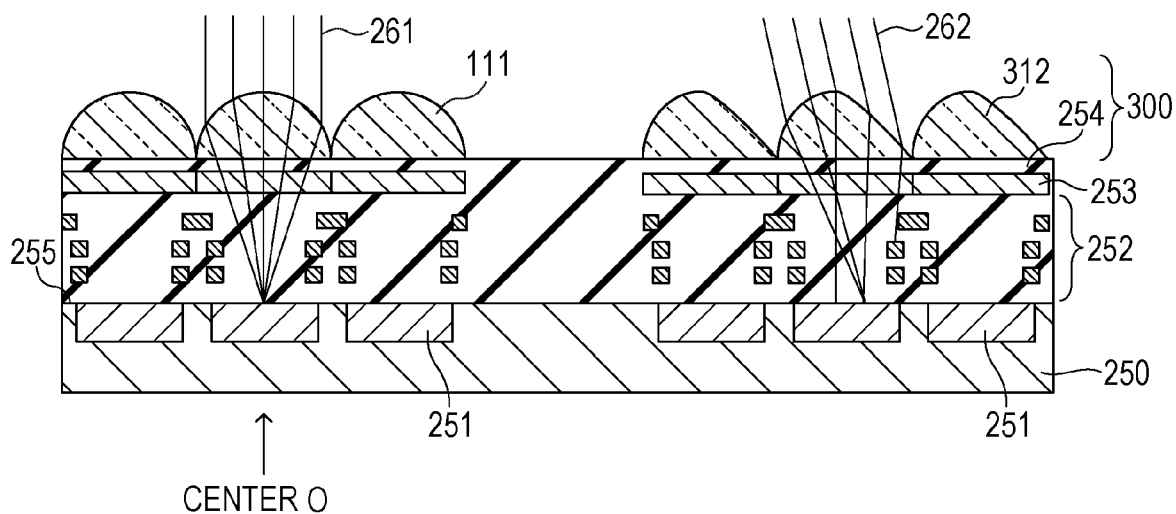


FIG. 4A

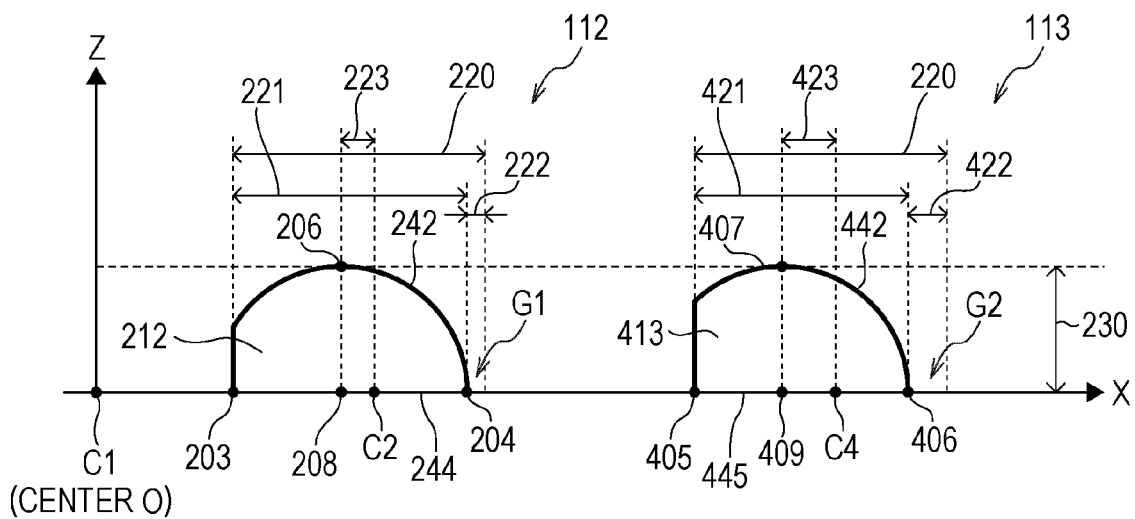


FIG. 4B

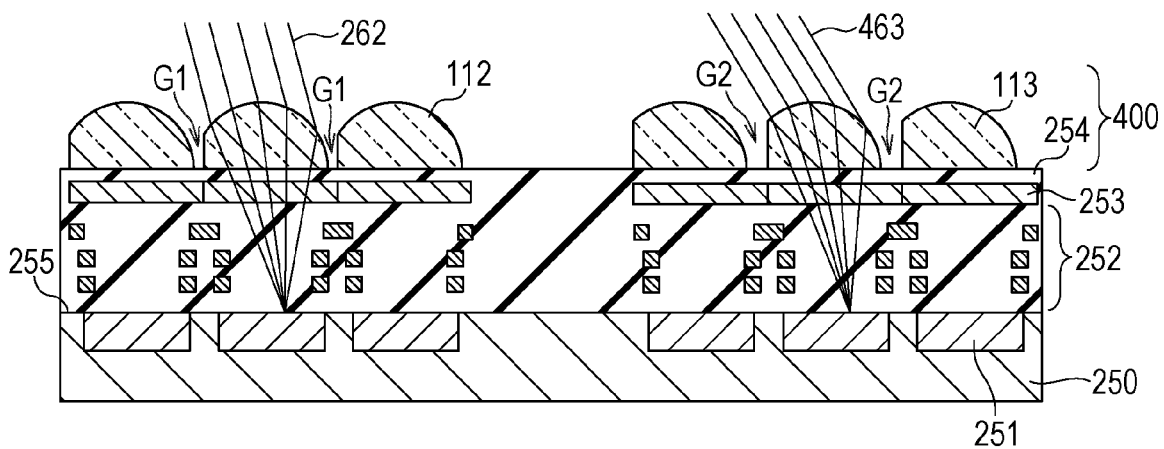


FIG. 5

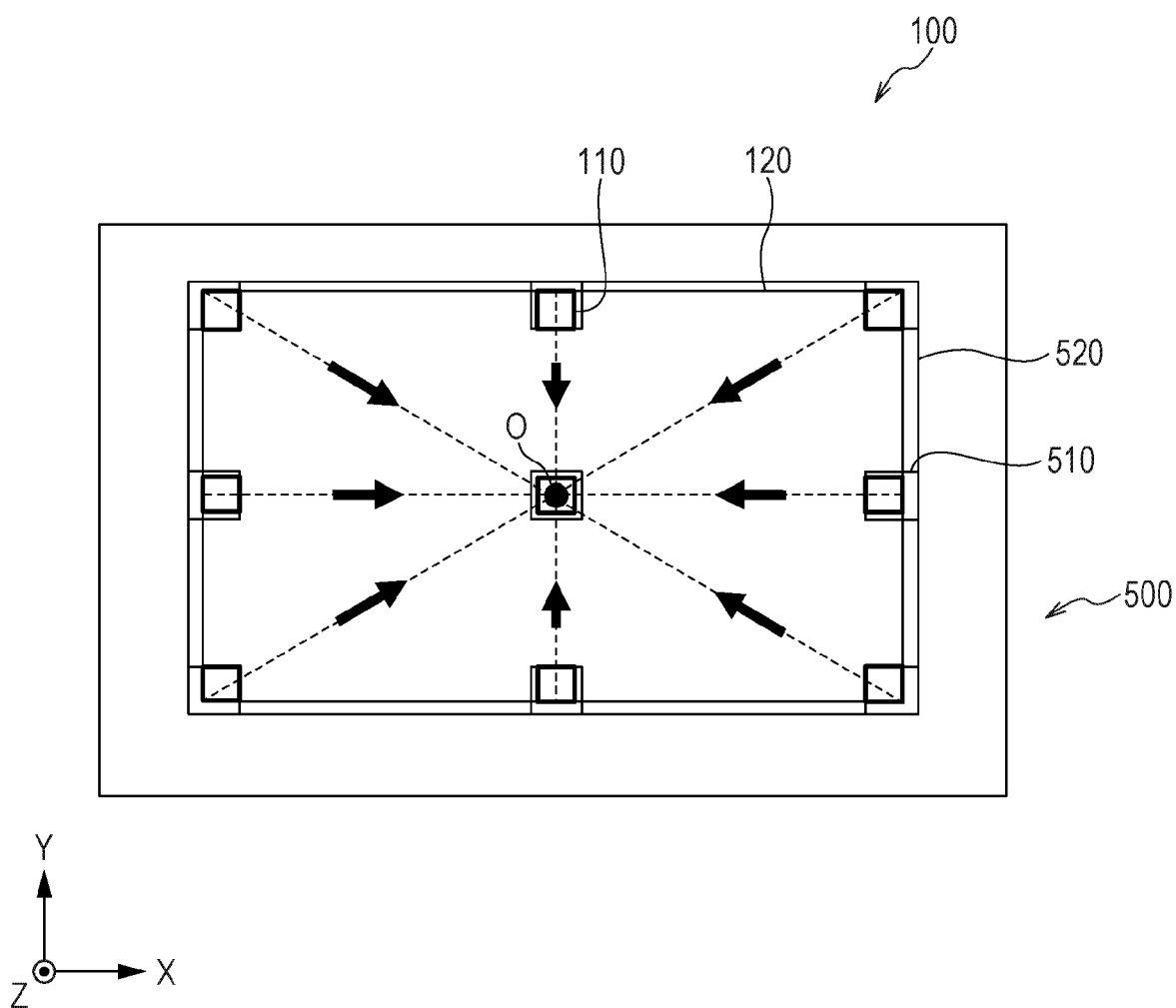


FIG. 6A

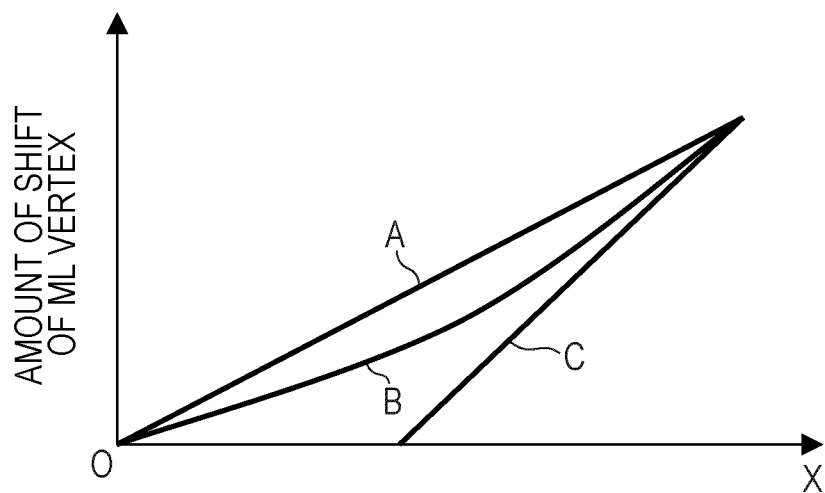


FIG. 6B

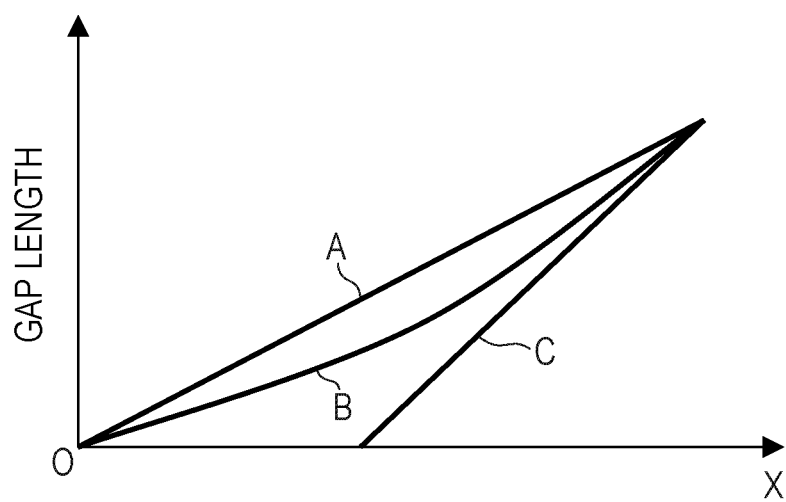


FIG. 7A

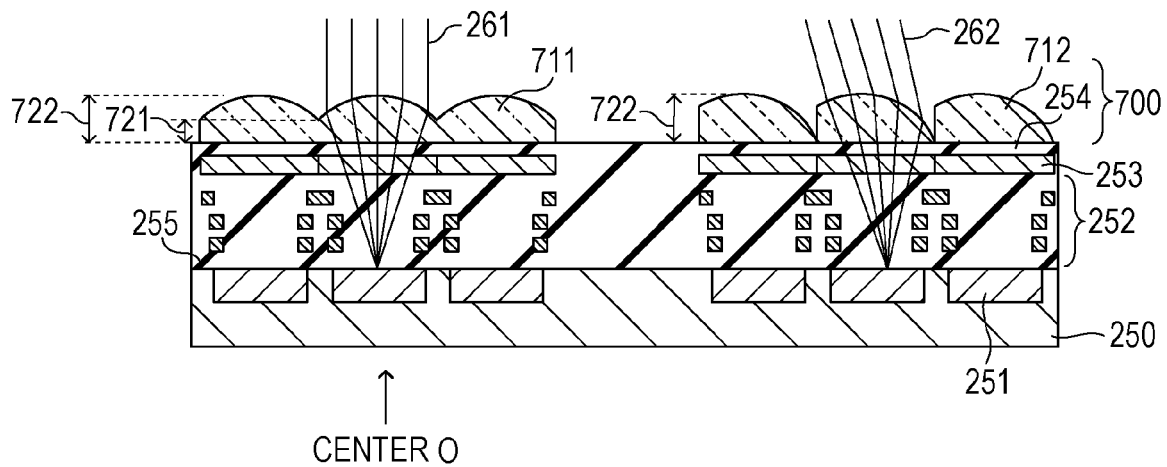


FIG. 7B

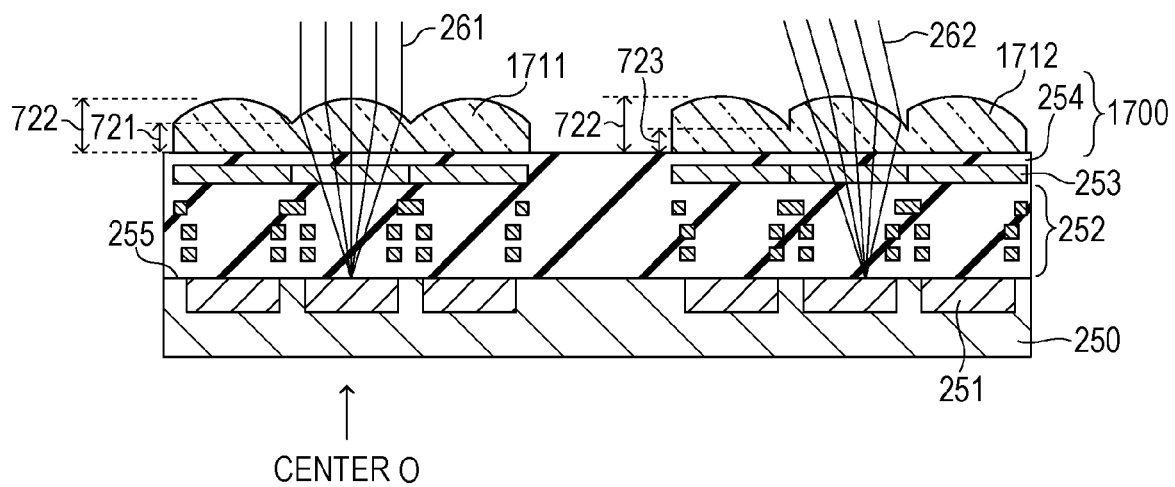




FIG. 8A

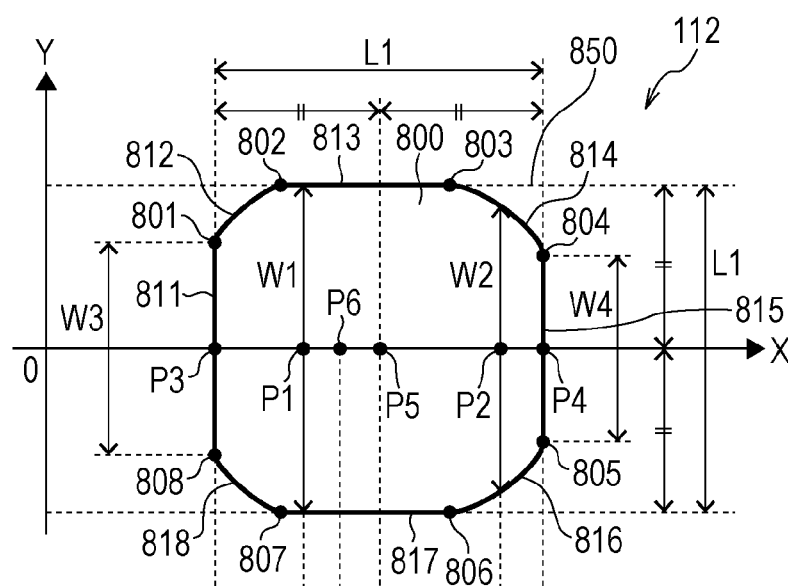


FIG. 8B

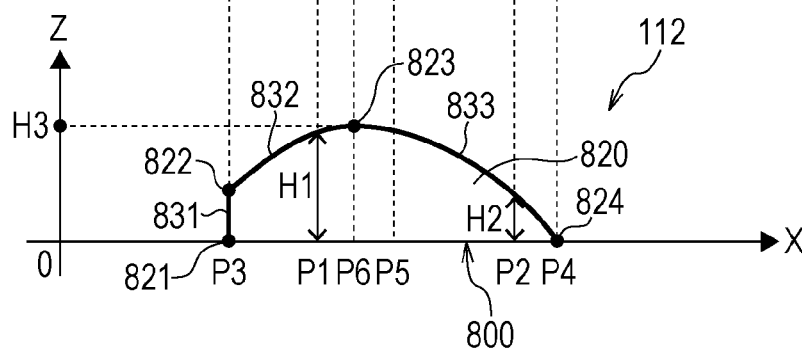


FIG. 8C

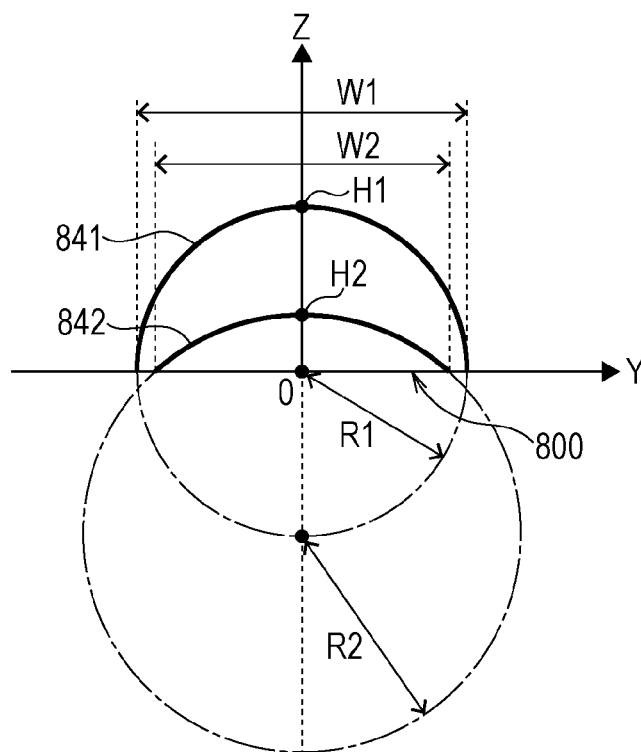
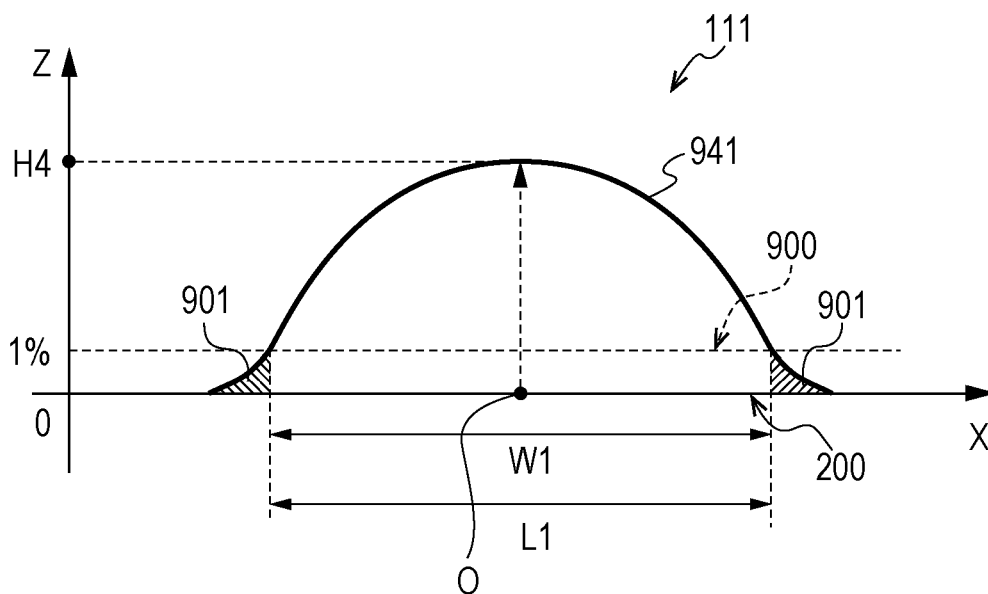


FIG. 9



# OPTICAL ELEMENT ARRAY, PHOTOELECTRIC CONVERSION APPARATUS, AND IMAGE PICKUP SYSTEM

## BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

### 1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to an optical element array, a photoelectric conversion apparatus including the optical element array, and an image pickup system.

### 2. Description of the Related Art

Photoelectric conversion apparatuses include optical element arrays, such as microlens arrays. Japanese Patent Laid-Open No. 2006-049721 discloses a photoelectric conversion apparatus in which the maximum curvature of convex surfaces of microlenses in an outer (peripheral) region of the photoelectric conversion apparatus is greater than that of convex surfaces of microlenses in a central region of the photoelectric conversion apparatus, so that light that is obliquely incident on the photoelectric conversion apparatus can be efficiently collected.

## SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

An optical element array includes a plurality of optical elements including at least a first optical element and a second optical element located on a same plane. The first optical element is located at a center of an array region, which is a region on the same plane in which the optical elements are arranged. The second optical element is further from the center of the array region than the first optical element. An orthogonal projection of the first optical element on the plane includes a first end and a second end located closer to the second optical element than the first end and located on a first straight line that passes through the first end and the center of the array region. An orthogonal projection of a vertex of the first optical element on the plane is equally spaced from the first end and the second end and located at a first position on the first straight line. An orthogonal projection of the second optical element on the plane includes a third end that is located on the first straight line and a fourth end that is located on the first straight line and that is further from the center of the array region than the third end is. An orthogonal projection of a vertex of the second optical element on the plane is located at a second position on the first straight line. An interval between the third end and the second position is smaller than an interval between the first end and the first position, and is also smaller than an interval between the fourth end and the second position. In a cross section of the first optical element, the cross section being perpendicular to the plane and including the first straight line, the first optical element includes a first outer edge that extends from the vertex of the first optical element to the second end. In a cross section of the second optical element, the cross section being perpendicular to the plane and including the first straight line, the second optical element includes a second outer edge that extends from the vertex of the second optical element to the fourth end. A radius of curvature of the second outer edge or a median value of the radius of curvature of the second outer edge is greater than or equal to 80% and less than or equal to 120% of a radius of curvature of the first outer edge or a median value of the radius of curvature of the first outer edge.

An optical element array includes a plurality of optical elements including at least a first optical element and a second optical element located on a same plane. The second optical element is further from a center of an array region, which is a region on the same plane in which the optical elements are

arranged, than the first optical element. An orthogonal projection of the first optical element on the plane includes a first end and a second end located further from the center of the array region than the first end is and located on a first straight line that passes through the first end and the center of the array region. An orthogonal projection of a vertex of the first optical element on the plane is located at a first position on the first straight line. An orthogonal projection of the second optical element on the plane includes a third end that is located on the first straight line and a fourth end that is located on the first straight line and that is further from the center of the array region than the third end is. An orthogonal projection of a vertex of the second optical element on the plane is located at a second position on the first straight line. An interval between the third end and the second position is smaller than an interval between the first end and the first position, and is also smaller than an interval between the fourth end and the second position. In a cross section of the first optical element, the cross section being perpendicular to the plane and including the first straight line, the first optical element includes a first outer edge that extends from the vertex of the first optical element to the second end. In a cross section of the second optical element, the cross section being perpendicular to the plane and including the first straight line, the second optical element includes a second outer edge that extends from the vertex of the second optical element to the fourth end. A radius of curvature of the second outer edge or a median value of the radius of curvature of the second outer edge is greater than or equal to 80% and less than or equal to 120% of a radius of curvature of the first outer edge or greater than or equal to 80% and less than or equal to 120% of a median value of the radius of curvature of the first outer edge.

Further features of the present invention will become apparent from the following description of exemplary embodiments with reference to the attached drawings.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a schematic plan view for describing a first embodiment.

FIG. 2A is a diagram for describing the shape of an optical element array according to the first embodiment.

FIG. 2B is a schematic sectional view for describing the first embodiment.

FIG. 3A is a diagram for describing the shape of an optical element array according to the first embodiment.

FIG. 3B is a schematic sectional view for describing the first embodiment.

FIG. 4A is a diagram for describing the shape of an optical element array according to a second embodiment.

FIG. 4B is a schematic sectional view for describing the second embodiment.

FIG. 5 is a schematic plan view for describing the second embodiment.

FIG. 6A is a graph for describing the second embodiment.

FIG. 6B is a graph for describing the second embodiment.

FIG. 7A is a schematic sectional view for describing a third embodiment.

FIG. 7B is a schematic sectional view for describing the third embodiment.

FIG. 8A is a diagram for describing the shape of an optical element array according to a fourth embodiment.

FIG. 8B is a diagram for describing the shape of the optical element array according to the fourth embodiment.

FIG. 8C is a diagram for describing the shape of the optical element array according to the fourth embodiment.

FIG. 9 is a diagram for describing the shape of an optical element according to any of the embodiments.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE EMBODIMENTS

With the microlenses described in Japanese Patent Laid-Open No. 2006-049721, although the maximum curvature of the convex surfaces of the microlenses is taken into consideration, the curvatures of end portions of the microlenses are not taken into consideration. The relationship between the curvatures of the end portions of the microlenses and the positions of the microlenses is also not taken into consideration.

When end portions of optical elements have different curvatures depending on the positions of the optical elements in an array region of the optical element array, there is a possibility that the light collecting performance of the optical elements will be reduced at the periphery of the array region. The reduction in the light collecting performance of the optical elements at the periphery of the array region may cause shading of an image in a photoelectric conversion apparatus.

Accordingly, the present disclosure provides an optical element array with which the reduction in light collecting performance of optical elements at the periphery of the array region can be suppressed.

The structures of optical element arrays according to embodiments of the present disclosure will be described. The embodiments may be modified or combined as appropriate. Optical element arrays according to the present disclosure may be included in a photoelectric conversion apparatus, a display device, an image pickup system including the photoelectric conversion apparatus, or a display system including the display device.

In the following description, an X-axis direction (first direction), a Y-axis direction (second direction), and a Z-axis direction (third direction), which pass through a certain center O, are used as references. However, the references are not limited to this. For example, a direction **131** that is inclined by an angle  $\theta 1$  with respect to the X-axis direction illustrated in FIG. 1 may be defined as the first direction, and a direction perpendicular to the direction **131** may be defined as the second direction. In other words, any direction that radially extends from the center of a region in which optical elements are arranged (array region) toward the outer periphery of the region may be defined as the first direction, and a direction perpendicular to the first direction may be defined as the second direction. In the following description, it is assumed that the optical element array extends along a plane including the first direction and the second direction.

#### First Embodiment

An optical element array according to a first embodiment will be described with reference to FIGS. 1, 2A, and 2B. FIG. 1 is a schematic plan view illustrating an optical element array **100**. The schematic plan view shows a projection image (orthogonal projection image) in which each element is projected onto a plane including an X-axis and a Y-axis, which is perpendicular to the X-axis.

The optical element array **100** includes a plurality of optical elements **110** on the same plane. The optical elements **110** are arranged in an array region **120**. An orthogonal projection of the array region **120** has a center (hereinafter referred to as center O). The center O of the array region **120** is the center of a region in which the optical elements **110**, which function optically, are arranged in at least one direction. Here, optical elements that do not function optically include, for example, optical elements arranged in a light shielding region including an optical black region, a peripheral circuit region, etc., of

a photoelectric conversion apparatus. The optical elements **110** are arranged such that the centers of orthogonal projection images of the optical elements **110** are on a straight line that extends in a single direction.

In the present embodiment, the optical elements **110** are arranged on a plane including an X-axis and a Y-axis, which is perpendicular to the X-axis. More specifically, the optical elements **110** are arranged in a matrix pattern (two-dimensional pattern) including n columns (n is a natural number) that are arranged in a direction along the X-axis (hereinafter referred to as an X-axis direction) and m rows (m is a natural number) that are arranged in a direction along the Y-axis (hereinafter referred to as a Y-axis direction). The one direction is defined as the X-axis direction (straight line). In FIG. 1, the coordinates of each optical element **110** are defined as (m, n). In the following description, an optical element **111** (first optical element) and an optical element **112** (second optical element) will be described as examples. As illustrated in FIG. 1, in the present embodiment, the optical element **111** is at the center O of the array region **120**, and the optical element **112** is separated from the optical element **111** by a length **141** in the X-axis direction. Here, it is assumed that the bottom surfaces of the optical elements **110** are included in the above-described plane.

FIG. 2A is a schematic diagram for describing the cross-sectional shapes of the optical element **111** and the optical element **112** along a plane that extends in the X-axis direction and a direction along a Z-axis (hereinafter referred to as a Z-axis direction). The Z-axis is perpendicular to both the X-axis and the Y-axis. In the following description, dimensions of each optical element in the X-axis direction, the Y-axis direction, and the Z-axis direction are defined as length, width, and height, respectively. The shapes of the optical element **111** and the optical element **112** will now be described in detail. In drawings illustrating cross-sectional shapes of optical elements, such as FIG. 2A, the cross-sectional shapes may be referred to as cross sections.

The optical element **111** has a semispherical shape, and has a vertex on the Z-axis in the plane extending in the X-axis direction and the Z-axis direction. Referring to FIG. 2A, in a cross section **211** of the optical element **111**, the optical element **111** includes a first end **201** and a second end **202** that are arranged in the first direction. Each end may either be a dot or a line. In the following description, the ends are dots arranged in the first direction (straight line). As shown in the cross section **211**, the optical element **111** has a bottom surface **243** that extends along the X-axis at the position where  $Z=0$ . The first end **201** of the optical element **111** is separated from the center O in the direction opposite to the X-axis direction, and the second end **202** of the optical element **111** is separated from the center O in the X-axis direction. The length between the first end **201** and the second end **202** in the X-axis direction is a length **220**. The length between the first end **201** and the second end **202** may be the largest length of the optical element **111** in the X-axis direction. Here, a length between two positions may mean an interval or a distance.

As illustrated in FIG. 2A, the optical element **111** has a first vertex **205** that is located at a first position **207** in the X-axis direction in the orthogonal projection image. The optical element **111** has a rotationally symmetrical shape with respect to the normal to the bottom surface **243** that passes through the vertex **205**. Here, the vertex is a highest portion of the optical element. The optical element may have a flat top surface. In such a case, the height of any point on the flat surface is defined as the height of the vertex. Also in the following description, the vertex has the same meaning. The first vertex **205** is located at a position separated from the

bottom surface **243** by a length **230** in the Z-axis direction. In other words, the height of the optical element **111** is the length **230**. In addition, in the orthogonal projection image, the length between the first position **207** and the first end **201** is equal to the length between the first position **207** and the second end **202**. When it is assumed that the optical element **111** is provided in a unit cell that is a rectangular region having the length **220**, it can be said that the first vertex **205** is at a center **C1** of the unit cell. In the present embodiment, the first position **207** is located at the center **O** of the array region **120** in FIG. 1.

The optical element **112** has an aspherical shape. When a cross section **212** is set as a reference, the optical element **112** is symmetric (line symmetric). However, the optical element **112** does not have a rotationally symmetrical shape with respect to the normal to a bottom surface **244** that passes through a second vertex **206**. The optical element **112** may, for example, have a planar shape illustrated in FIGS. 8A to 8C, which will be described below, or a shape called a tear-drop shape.

Referring to FIG. 2A, the cross section **212** of the optical element **112** includes a third end **203** and a fourth end **204**. As shown in the cross section **212**, the optical element **112** has the bottom surface **244** that extends along the X-axis at the position where  $Z=0$ . The third end **203** of the optical element **112** is closer to the center **O**, and the fourth end **204** of the optical element **112** is further from the center **O**. The length between the third end **203** and the fourth end **204** in the X-axis direction is a length **221**. The length between the third end **203** and the fourth end **204** may be the largest length of the optical element **112** in the X-axis direction.

As illustrated in FIG. 2A, the optical element **112** has the second vertex **206** that is located at a second position **208** in the X-axis direction. The second vertex **206** is at a position separated from the bottom surface **244** by the length **230** in the Z-axis direction. In other words, the height of the optical element **112** is the length **230**, which is the same as the height of the optical element **111**. In the orthogonal projection image, the length between the second position **208** and the third end **203** is smaller than the length between the second position **208** and the fourth end **204**. When it is assumed that the optical element **112** is provided in a unit cell that is a rectangular region having the length **220**, it can be said that the second vertex **206** is closer to the center **O** than a center **C2** of the unit cell by a length **223**.

When the optical element **111** and the optical element **112** are compared with each other, in the X-axis direction, the length between the first end **201** and the first position **207** is greater than the length between the third end **203** and the second position **208**. In other words, unlike the positional relationship between the first vertex **205** and the center of the optical element **111**, the second vertex **206** is shifted toward the center **O** from the center of the optical element **112**. In addition, the length **221**, which is the length between the third end **203** and the fourth end **204**, is smaller than the length **220**, which is the length between the first end **201** and the second end **202**, by a length **222**.

Each of the optical element **111** and the optical element **112** has a plurality of outer edges which will be described below. The optical element **111** has an outer edge **241** (first outer edge) that extends from the first vertex **205** to the second end **202**. Similarly, the optical element **112** has an outer edge **242** (second outer edge) that extends from the second vertex **206** to the fourth end **204**. The radius of curvature of the outer edge **242** is the same as the radius of curvature of the outer edge **241**. When the optical elements have such a shape, in the case where the vertices of the optical elements are shifted, reduc-

tion in the light collecting performance of the optical elements can be suppressed even at positions separated from the center **O** in the X-axis direction. In the case where the outer edge **241** and/or the outer edge **242** have/has a nonuniform radius of curvature, the median value of the radius of curvature of the outer edge **241** and/or the median value of the radius of curvature of the outer edge **242** may be determined. The effects of the present embodiment can be achieved as long as the radii of curvature, or the median values of the radii of curvature, are in the range of 80% or more and 120% or less. In other words, the effects can be achieved as long as the difference between the radii of curvature, or the median values of the radii of curvature, is within  $\pm 20\%$ .

Next, a case in which the optical element array according to the present embodiment is included in a photoelectric conversion apparatus will be described with reference to FIG. 2B. FIG. 2B is a schematic sectional view of a part of a photoelectric conversion apparatus including the optical element array corresponding to FIG. 2A. A multilayer wiring structure **252** including a plurality of wiring layers and a plurality of insulating layers, a color filter layer **253** including a plurality of color filters, and a planarization layer **254** are provided on a semiconductor substrate **250** including a plurality of photoelectric conversion elements **251**. The optical element array **100** is provided on the planarization layer **254**. The semiconductor substrate is, for example, an N-type semiconductor substrate, and includes an epitaxial layer and P-type semiconductor regions that serve as wells. The photoelectric conversion elements are, for example, photodiodes. In FIG. 2B, N-type semiconductor regions that serve as the photoelectric conversion elements are illustrated. Here, pixels are rectangular regions, and are also regarded as unit cells. Each pixel includes at least one photoelectric conversion element. In the present embodiment, a single pixel is provided for each of the optical elements included in the optical element array **100**. In other words, the optical element array **100** is arranged in accordance with an image pickup region, in which a plurality of pixels of the photoelectric conversion apparatus are arranged. Here, the image pickup region is a region in which the pixels for acquiring image signals are arranged, and the center of the image pickup region is the center of the region in which the pixels for acquiring optical signals are arranged. The region in which the pixels for acquiring the optical signals are arranged does not include optical black pixels or circuit regions. FIG. 2B illustrates three optical elements **111** and three optical elements **112**. Three photoelectric conversion elements (first photoelectric conversion elements) are provided for the three optical elements **111**, and three photoelectric conversion elements (second photoelectric conversion elements) are provided for the three optical elements **112**. The three optical elements **111** are arranged without gaps therebetween, and are in contact with each other. Here, gaps refer to flat regions between the optical elements. The three optical elements **112** are arranged with gaps **G1** therebetween. The behavior of light in the above-described photoelectric conversion apparatus will now be described.

In general, an imaging lens (not shown) is disposed above the image pickup region of the photoelectric conversion apparatus. The imaging lens is arranged such that an optical axis thereof corresponds to the center of the image pickup region, and focuses light from an object on the plane of the image pickup region. At this time, the incident angle of the chief ray is small at the center of the image pickup region, and the incident angle of the chief ray is large at the periphery of the image pickup region. Here, the incident angle is, for example, an angle between a direction perpendicular to the top surface of the photoelectric conversion apparatus and the chief ray. To

increase the sensitivity at the periphery of the image pickup region, it is necessary to collect the incident light and make the direction in which light is incident on the light receiving surface of each photoelectric conversion element of the photoelectric conversion apparatus close to the direction perpendicular to the light receiving surface.

Referring to FIG. 2B, light 261 is a chief ray that is incident on the optical element array 100 at the center of the image pickup region, which is also the center of the optical element array 100, and is incident on a surface 255 of the semiconductor substrate 250 in a direction substantially perpendicular to the surface 255. Light 262 is a chief ray that is incident on the optical element array 100 at a position separated from the center of the image pickup region, that is, from the center of the optical element array 100, and is obliquely incident on the surface 255 of the semiconductor substrate 250. Each optical element 112 is capable of reducing the incident angle at which the light 262 is incident on the light receiving surface of the corresponding photoelectric conversion element. In addition, high light collecting performance can be achieved even at the periphery of the image pickup region. As a result, the sensitivity can be increased at the periphery of the image pickup region.

Next, the effects achieved by the optical elements according to the present embodiment will be described with reference to FIGS. 3A and 3B. FIGS. 3A and 3B illustrate a case in which an optical element array 300 including optical elements 312 having a shape that differs from the shape of the optical elements in FIGS. 2A and 2B is used. FIG. 3A is a schematic diagram corresponding to FIG. 2A, and illustrates the cross sectional shapes of each optical element 111 and each optical element 312. FIG. 3B is a schematic sectional view corresponding to FIG. 2B, and illustrates a photoelectric conversion apparatus including the optical elements 111 and the optical elements 312. In the structure illustrated in FIGS. 3A and 3B, the optical elements 111 are the same as the optical elements 111 illustrated in FIGS. 2A and 2B, and explanations thereof are thus omitted.

The cross section of the optical element 312 illustrated in FIG. 3A includes an end 303 of the optical element 312 that is closer to the center O, and an end 304 of the optical element 312 that is further from the center O of the optical element 312, and is taken along the X-axis. As illustrated in the cross section, the optical element 312 has a bottom surface that extends along the X-axis at the position where  $Z=0$ . The end 303 of the optical element 312 is closer to the center O, and the end 304 of the optical element 312 is further from the center O. The length between the end 303 and the end 304 in the X-axis direction is the length 220. The length between the end 303 and the end 304 is the largest length of the optical element 312 in the X-axis direction.

Referring to FIG. 3A, the optical element 312 has a vertex 306 at a position 308 in the X-axis direction. The vertex 306 is at a position separated from the bottom surface by the length 230 in the Z-axis direction. In other words, the height of the optical element 312 is the length 230, which is the same as the height of the optical element 111. The length between the position 308 and the end 303 is smaller than the length between the position 308 and the end 304. When it is assumed that the optical element 312 is provided in a unit cell that is a rectangular region having the length 220, it can be said that the vertex 306 is closer to the center O than a center C3 of the unit cell by a length 223.

Similar to the optical element 111, the cross section of the optical element 312 illustrated in FIG. 3A has an outer edge 342 that extends from the vertex 306 to the end 304. The differences between the optical element 312 and the optical

element 112 illustrated in FIGS. 2A and 2B are the length in the X-axis direction and the radius of curvature of the outer edge. The radius of curvature of the outer edge 342 differs from that of the outer edge 242 of the optical element 112 illustrated in FIGS. 2A and 2B. In other words, the radius of curvature of the outer edge 342 differs from that of the outer edge 241 of the optical element 111. The radius of curvature, or the median value of the radius of curvature, of the outer edge 342 is not in the range of 80% or more and 120% or less (i.e. greater than or equal to 80% and less than or equal to 120%) of the radius of curvature, or the median value of the radius of curvature, of the outer edge 241. More specifically, the radius of curvature of the outer edge 342 is above the range of 80% or more and 120% or less (i.e. greater than or equal to 80% and less than or equal to 120%) of the radius of curvature of the outer edge 241.

FIG. 3B illustrates a case in which light 262 is incident in a manner similar to that in FIG. 2B on a photoelectric conversion apparatus including optical elements 312 having the above-described structure. The light collecting performance of the optical elements 312 is smaller than that of the optical elements 112 illustrated in FIG. 2B, and the light 262 is incident on a wiring layer instead of the corresponding photoelectric conversion elements 251.

The radius of curvature of the optical elements 112 illustrated in FIG. 2B is the same as that of the optical elements 111. With this type of optical element array, the reduction in light collecting performance of the optical elements at the periphery of the array region can be suppressed. In the photoelectric conversion apparatus including the optical element array, the reduction in sensitivity at the periphery of the image pickup region can be suppressed.

The optical element array according to the present embodiment can be formed by the following method. For example, the color filter layer 253 is formed on the multilayer wiring structure of the photoelectric conversion apparatus. Then, a film of photosensitive resist for forming the optical elements is formed. The photosensitive resist is, for example, a positive type resist, and can be applied by spin-coating. The photosensitive resist is subjected to exposure by using a photo mask formed on the basis of the shape of the above-described optical element array, and is then developed. Thus, the optical elements are formed. A half-tone mask or an area gradation mask may be used as the photo mask. The area gradation mask is a photo mask whose transmittance is controlled by adjusting the density and area of small light-shielding elements. The optical element array may be formed by other methods. In the case where the optical elements have heights and shapes different from the design due to variations in manufacturing, the effect of suppressing the reduction in sensitivity at the periphery can be achieved when the differences are within the following range. That is, the heights of the optical elements at the periphery need to be in the range of 80% or more and 120% or less (i.e. greater than or equal to 80% and less than or equal to 120%) of those of the optical elements at the center of the image pickup region, and the radii of curvature of the outer edges of the optical elements at the periphery need to be in the range of 80% or more and 120% or less (i.e. greater than or equal to 80% and less than or equal to 120%) of those of the optical elements at the center of the image pickup region. The range for the heights may be 90% or more and 110% or less (i.e. greater than or equal to 90% and less than or equal to 110%), and the range for the radii of curvature of the outer edges may be 90% or more and 110% or less (i.e. greater than or equal to 90% and less than or equal to 110%).

In the present embodiment, the vertex of an optical element **111** is located at the center **O** of the array region **120** in the orthogonal projection image. However, in the orthogonal projection image, the positional relationship between the center **O** of the array region **120** and the optical elements is not limited to this. For example, the center **O** may be located between two optical elements. Alternatively, the center **O** may be offset from the vertex of an optical element **111**.

When the shapes of the optical element arrays according to the present embodiments are measured, it can be confirmed that the optical element arrays have the following structure. That is, the vertices of the optical elements arranged in a direction away from the center of the array region have substantially the same height. Also, the vertices of the optical elements that are far from the center of the array region are closer to the center of the array region in the optical elements than the vertices of the optical elements that are close to the center of the array regions are in the optical elements. In addition, the width of the gaps between the optical elements increases as the distance from the center of the array region increases. When the optical elements have the above-described shape, the structures described in the present embodiment can be obtained.

#### Second Embodiment

An optical element array according to a second embodiment will be described with reference to FIGS. **4A** and **4B**. An optical element array **400** according to the present embodiment includes an optical element **113** (third optical element). FIG. **4A** is a schematic diagram illustrating the cross sectional shapes of optical elements, and FIG. **4B** is a schematic sectional view of a photoelectric conversion apparatus. In FIGS. **4A** and **4B**, an optical element **112** is the same as that in FIGS. **2A** and **2B**, and descriptions thereof are thus omitted.

Referring to FIG. **1**, the optical element **113** illustrated in FIGS. **4A** and **4B** is further from the center **O** in the X-axis direction than the optical element **112** is, and is separated from the center **O** by a length **142** in the X-axis direction. The optical element **113** is shaped so as to be symmetric when a cross section **413** is set as a reference and asymmetric when the normal to a bottom surface **445** that passes through a third vertex **407** is set as a reference.

Referring to FIG. **4A**, the cross section **413** of the optical element **113** includes a fifth end **405** and a sixth end **406**. As shown in the cross section **413**, the optical element **113** has the bottom surface **445** that extends along the X-axis at the position where  $Z=0$ . The fifth end **405** of the optical element **113** is closer to the center **O**, and the sixth end **406** of the optical element **113** is further from the center **O**. The length between the fifth end **405** and the sixth end **406** in the X-axis direction is a length **421**. The length between the fifth end **405** and the sixth end **406** is the largest length of the optical element **113** in the X-axis direction.

As illustrated in FIG. **4A**, the optical element **113** has the third vertex **407** at a third position **409** in the X-axis direction. The third vertex **407** is at a position separated from the bottom surface **445** by the length **230** in the Z-axis direction. In other words, the height of the optical element **113** is the same as the height of the optical element **112**. The length between the third position **409** and the fifth end **405** is smaller than the length between the third position **409** and the sixth end **406**. When it is assumed that the optical element **113** is provided in a unit cell that is a rectangular region having the length **220**, it can be said that the third vertex **407** is closer to the center **O** than a center **C4** of the unit cell by a length **423**.

When the optical element **112** and the optical element **113** are compared with each other, in the X-axis direction, the length between the third end **203** and the second position **208**

is greater than the length between the fifth end **405** and the third position **409**. In other words, compared to the positional relationship between the second vertex **206** and the center of the optical element **112**, the third vertex **407** is shifted further toward the center **O** from the center of the optical element **113**. In addition, the length **421**, which is the length between the fifth end **405** and the sixth end **406**, is smaller than the length **220**, and is also smaller than the length **221**, which is the length between the third end **203** and the fourth end **204**. In other words, a length **422** is smaller than the length **222**.

The optical element **113** has an outer edge **442** (third outer edge) that extends from the third vertex **407** to the sixth end **406** in the cross section **413**. The radius of curvature of the outer edge **442** is the same as that of the outer edge **242** of the optical element **112** in the cross section **212**. Since the optical element **113** has such a shape, reduction in the light collecting performance of the optical elements can be suppressed also at a position further from the center **O** in the X-axis direction than the optical element **112** is. Similar to the first embodiment, also with the outer edge **242** and the outer edge **442**, the median values of the radii of curvature can be determined. The effects of the present embodiment can be achieved when these values are within the range of 80% or more and 120% or less (i.e. greater than or equal to 80% and less than or equal to 120%).

A gap **G2** having the length **422** is provided between the optical element **113** and an optical element that is adjacent to the optical element **113** in the X-axis direction. A gap **G1**, which has the length **222** smaller than the length **422**, is provided between the optical element **112** and an optical element that is adjacent to the optical element **112** in the X-axis direction. Thus, the gap between the optical elements increases as the distance from the center **O** of the optical element array increases. The length of an interval between the optical element **111** and an optical element that is adjacent to the optical element **111** in the X-axis direction is smaller than the length **222**. Alternatively, the adjacent optical elements may be in contact with each other (not shown). With the optical element array including the above-described optical elements, the reduction in light collecting performance of the optical elements can be suppressed even at positions separated from the center **O**. In addition, in the case where the optical element array is included in a photoelectric conversion apparatus as illustrated in FIG. **4B**, the reduction in light collecting performance of the optical elements at positions separated from the center **O** can be further suppressed.

In FIG. **4B**, the unit cells of the optical elements of the optical element array **400** are arranged such that the centers thereof coincide with the centers of the corresponding pixels of the photoelectric conversion apparatus. However, when the incident angle of light is large at the periphery of the array region **120**, the unit cells of the optical elements may be shifted toward the center **O** of the array region **120**. This will be described in detail with reference to FIG. **5**.

FIG. **5** is a schematic plan view of a photoelectric conversion apparatus **500** including the optical element array **100**. The photoelectric conversion apparatus **500** includes an image pickup region **520** in which a plurality of pixels **510** of the photoelectric conversion apparatus **500** are arranged. In FIG. **5**, the array region **120** and the image pickup region **520** are drawn so as to overlap, and rectangular unit cells including the pixels **510** and rectangular unit cells including the respective optical elements **110** are schematically drawn so as to overlap. The center **O** of the array region **120** coincides with the center of the image pickup region **520**. The center of each optical element **110** is shifted from the center of the corresponding pixel **510** by a certain length toward the center

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O. Even when light is obliquely incident on pixels near the outer periphery of the image pickup region **520** at a large incident angle, the optical elements are located on the optical paths. Therefore, the reduction in light collecting performance can be suppressed. The positions of the optical elements and the pixels may be adjusted in this manner. Another method for shifting the centers of the pixels with respect to the centers of the respective optical elements is to make the size (area) of the unit cells including the optical elements **110** smaller than the size (area) of the unit cells including the pixels **510**. Another method for shifting the centers of the pixels with respect to the centers of the optical elements is to change the size of the gap illustrated in FIG. 2B.

In the optical element array illustrated in FIG. 5, the amount of shift increases as the length from the center of the image pickup region increases. The amount of shift will be described with reference to FIG. 6A. In FIG. 6A, the horizontal axis represents the length from the center of the image pickup region in a direction from the center of the image pickup region toward the outside of the image pickup region, and the vertical axis represents the amount of shift of the vertex of each optical element. FIG. 6A shows three examples of the manner in which the amount of shift is changed. Line A shows an example in which the amount of shift increases in direct proportion to the length from the center of the image pickup region. Line B shows an example in which the amount of shift increases non-linearly along a parabola with respect to the length from the center of the image pickup region. Line C shows an example in which the amount of shift starts to increase from a position that is separated from the center of the image pickup region by a certain length. Thus, the amount of shift can be changed in any way. The amount of shift can be determined on the basis of, for example, design data such as the opening ratio of the photoelectric conversion apparatus, the height from the photoelectric conversion elements to the optical elements, the refractive index of each material, and the incident angle of light.

As illustrated in FIG. 2B, to maintain the radius of curvature of the outer edge of each optical element at the periphery of the image pickup region, a gap, which is a flat region, is provided between each optical element **112** and an optical element adjacent thereto. The length of the gaps will be described with reference to FIG. 6B. In FIG. 6B, the horizontal axis represents the length from the center of the image pickup region in a direction from the center of the image pickup region toward the outside of the image pickup region, and the vertical axis represents the gap length. FIG. 6B shows three examples of the manner in which the gap length is changed. Line A shows an example in which the gap length increases in direct proportion to the length from the center of the image pickup region. Line B shows an example in which the gap length increases non-linearly along a parabola with respect to the length from the center of the image pickup region. Line C shows an example in which the gap length starts to increase from a position that is separated from the center of the image pickup region by a certain length. Similar to the amount of shift, the gap length can be changed in any way. In the case where the amount of shift is changed along Line B, the gap length may also be changed along Line B to facilitate the design of the radius of curvature of the outer edge of each optical element.

In the present embodiment, the optical element **111**, the optical element **112**, and the optical element **113** illustrated in FIG. 1 are described as first, second, and third optical elements, respectively. However, the above-described relationships of the amount of shift of the vertex and the gap length also apply to, for example, three optical elements including

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the optical element **112**, the optical element **113**, and an optical element **114** illustrated in FIG. 1. As illustrated in FIG. 1, the optical element **114** is further away from the center O in the X-axis direction than the optical element **113** is, and has the height **230**, similar to the optical element **112** and the optical element **113**. In this case, the amount of shift of the vertex and the gap length of the optical element **114** may be designed so as to satisfy the above-described relationships.

In the optical element array, the number of each of the first to third optical elements may, for example, be one. Alternatively, different numbers of first to third optical elements may be provided. Thus, any numbers of first to third optical elements may be provided. For example, each of the first to third optical elements may be provided in a plurality in the optical element array. In this case, the optical element array may include a first region in which the first optical elements are arranged, a second region in which the second optical elements are arranged, and a third region in which the third optical elements are arranged.

#### Third Embodiment

FIGS. 7A and 7B are schematic sectional views illustrating photoelectric conversion apparatuses according to a third embodiment. FIG. 7A is a schematic sectional view that corresponds to FIG. 2B. An optical element array **700** includes optical elements **711** and optical elements **712**. The optical elements **711** differ from the optical elements **111** illustrated in FIG. 2B in that the boundaries between the adjacent optical elements are higher than those between the optical elements **111** by a height **721**, and the optical elements **711** are shaped such that a member having the height **721** and the optical elements **111** are combined together. The optical elements **712** differ from the optical elements **112** illustrated in FIG. 2B in that there are no gaps between the adjacent optical elements. Similar to FIG. 2B, the height of the optical elements **711** and the height of the optical elements **712** are both equal to a length **722**. Similar to FIG. 2B, the vertices of the optical elements **712** are shifted further toward the center of the image pickup region than the vertices of the optical elements **711** are in the respective unit cells. Also when the optical elements **711** and **712** have the above-described shapes, the height of the optical elements **711** can be made the same as the height of the optical elements **712** and the radius of curvature of the outer edge between the vertex and an end of each optical element **711** can be made the same as the radius of curvature of the outer edge between the vertex and an end of each optical element **712**. In this optical element array, since there are no gaps in a region corresponding to the periphery of the image pickup region, compared to the first embodiment, the amount of incident light that can be collected can be increased at the periphery of the image pickup region. As a result, the reduction in sensitivity at the periphery of the image pickup region can be further suppressed.

The shape of the optical element array is not limited to this, and the optical element array may instead have a shape illustrated in FIG. 7B. FIG. 7B is a schematic sectional view that corresponds to FIG. 7A. An optical element array **1700** includes optical elements **1711** and optical elements **1712**. The optical elements **1711** are the same as the optical elements **711** illustrated in FIG. 7A. The optical elements **1712** differ from the optical elements **712** illustrated in FIG. 7A in that the boundaries between the adjacent optical elements are higher than those between the optical elements **712** by a height **723**. Similar to FIG. 7A, the vertices of the optical elements **1712** are shifted further toward the center of the image pickup region than the vertices of the optical elements **1711** are in the respective unit cells. Also when the optical elements **1711** and **1712** have the above-described shapes, the



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height of the optical elements 1711 can be made the same as the height of the optical elements 1712 and the radius of curvature of the outer edge between the vertex and an end of each optical element 1711 can be made the same as the radius of curvature of the outer edge between the vertex and an end of each optical element 1712.

#### Fourth Embodiment

In a fourth embodiment, an example of the shape of an optical element 112 according to other embodiments will be described. FIG. 8A is a schematic diagram illustrating the planar shape of the optical element 112. FIGS. 8B and 8C are schematic diagrams illustrating the cross sectional shapes of the optical element 112.

FIG. 8A is a schematic plan view illustrating a bottom surface 800 of the optical element 112 on a plane that extends in the X-axis direction and the Y-axis direction. The bottom surface 800 has the same shape as an image (orthogonal projection image) obtained by projecting the optical element 112 onto the plane that extends in the X-axis direction and the Y-axis direction. As is clear from the bottom surface 800, the optical element 112 has a length L1 in both the X-axis direction and the Y-axis direction. The bottom surface 800 (optical element) includes positions P1 to P6 arranged in the X-axis direction. The positions P3, P1, P6, P5, P2, and P4 are arranged in that order from the position closest to the center O.

In the bottom surface 800 of the optical element 112, an outer edge 811 of a region 850, the outer edge 811 being closest to the center O and extending in the Y-axis direction, is disposed at the position P3. In addition, in the bottom surface 800 of the optical element 112, an outer edge 815 of the region 850, the outer edge 815 being farthest from the center O and extending in the Y-axis direction, is disposed at the position P4. The center of the bottom surface 800 of the optical element 112 is disposed at the position P5, which is at the middle point between the position P3 and the position P4. In other words, the position P4 is separated from the position P3 by the length L1, and the position P5 is separated from the position P3 by half the length L1 (L1/2). The position P6 is the position of the vertex of the optical element 112 in the X-axis direction, as described below. The region 850 corresponds to a unit cell described in other embodiments, and corresponds to a single cell of a two-dimensional grid arranged in the array region 120. A single optical element is disposed in each cell.

As illustrated in FIG. 8A, the bottom surface 800 is horizontally line symmetric about the X-axis, and includes outer edges 811 to 818. The outer edge 811 is a straight line connecting a point 801 and a point 808. The outer edge 812 is a curve connecting the point 801 and a point 802. The outer edge 813 is a straight line connecting the point 802 and a point 803. The outer edge 814 is a curve connecting the point 803 and a point 804. The outer edge 815 is a straight line connecting the point 804 and a point 805. The outer edge 816 is a curve connecting the point 805 and a point 806. The outer edge 817 is a straight line connecting the point 806 and a point 807. The outer edge 818 is a curve connecting the point 807 and the point 808. The outer edges 811 and 815 are straight lines that extend in the Y-axis direction. The outer edges 813 and 817 are straight lines that extend in the X-axis direction. The outer edges 812, 814, 816, and 818 have curvatures, and connect the straight lines.

The bottom surface 800 has a width W1 (first width) in the Y-axis direction at the position P1 (fourth position) in the X-axis direction. The bottom surface 800 has a width W2 (second width) in the Y-axis direction at the position P2 (fifth position) in the X-axis direction. In addition, the bottom surface 800 has widths W3 and W4 in the Y-axis direction at

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the positions P3 and P4, respectively. These widths satisfy at least  $W1 > W2$ . Furthermore,  $W1 > W2 > W3 > W4$  may be satisfied. In FIG. 8A,  $W1 = L1$  is satisfied.

The position P1 is any position that is separated from the position P3 by a length that is less than or equal to half the length L1, and the position P2 is any position that is separated from the position P3 by a length that is greater than half the length L1. In other words, the position P1 is any position that is closer to the position P3 than the position separated from the position P3 by half the length L1, and the position P2 is any position that is further from the position separated from the position P3 by half the length L1. The positions P1 and P2 are arranged such that the distance between the position P2 and the center O is greater than the distance between the position P1 and the center O.

FIG. 8B is a schematic diagram illustrating the cross sectional shape of the optical element 112 along the X-axis in FIG. 8A. A cross section 820 of the optical element 112 along the plane that extends in the Z-axis direction and the X-axis direction includes outer edges 831 to 833. The outer edge 831 is a straight line that connects a point 821 and a point 822. The outer edge 832 is a curve that connects the point 822 and a point 823. The outer edge 833 is a curve that connects the point 823 and a point 824. The optical element 112 has a height H1 (first height) at the position P1, a height H2 (second height) at the position P2, and a height H3 at the position P6. The heights satisfy  $H3 > H1 > H2$ . Here, the height H3 is the largest height of the optical element 112. In other words, the point 823 at the position P6 is the vertex of the optical element 112. The vertex of the optical element 112 is at the position P6, which is closer to the center O than the position P5. Here, the vertex means the highest portion of the cross section. In the present embodiment, the optical element 112 has the vertex point. However, it is not necessary that the highest portion be a point, and the portion between the position P1 and the position P5 may, for example, have the height H3.

As illustrated in FIG. 8B, in the optical element 112, the outer edge 832 includes a portion having a radius of curvature that is smaller than that of the outer edge 833. The outer edge 832 may also include a portion having a radius of curvature that is greater than that of the outer edge 833. The radius of curvature, or the median value of the radius of curvature, of the outer edge 833 is the same as that of the outer edge 241 of the optical element 111. With this structure, high lens power can be achieved and the light incident on the outer edge 833 can be collected with higher light collecting performance compared to that in the structure of the related art. The radius of curvature can be determined from a tangent line at any point on the cross section of an optical element. For example, a tangent line of the outer edge 833 at the middle point of the outer edge 833 in the X-axis direction (middle point between the positions P6 and P4) is determined. The radius of curvature can be determined from an inscribed circle that is in contact with the tangent line. The radius of curvature of each portion can be determined by other general methods for measuring the radius of curvature. Alternatively, similar to other embodiments, the median value of the radius of curvature of each outer edge can be determined.

FIG. 8C is a schematic diagram illustrating the cross sectional shapes of the optical element 112 at the position P1 and the position P2 in FIG. 8A. A cross section 841 is a cross section of the optical element 112 taken along the Y-axis direction at the position P1 in FIG. 8A. A cross section 842 is a cross section of the optical element 112 taken along the Y-axis direction at the position P2 in FIG. 8A. In the cross section 841, the optical element 112 has a width W1 and a first height H1, which is the largest height of the cross section 841,

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at the vertex of the cross section **841**. The outer edge of the cross section **841** has a radius of curvature **R1** (first radius of curvature). In the cross section **842**, the optical element **112** has a width **W2** and a height **H2**, which is the largest height of the cross section **842**, at the vertex of the cross section **842**. Although the cross sections of the optical element **112** have the vertex points in the present embodiment, as described above, it is not necessary that portions at which the optical element **112** have the heights **H1** and **H2** be points. The outer edge of the cross section **842** has a radius of curvature **R2** (second radius of curvature). The radii of curvature satisfies  $R1 < R2$ . Although  $R1 \geq R2$  may be satisfied, the width **W2** will be reduced in such a case. Accordingly, there is a possibility that the area occupancy will be reduced. In such a case, the width **W2** of the optical element may form an outer edge in FIG. **8A**. When the outer edge having the width **W2** is provided at the position farthest from the center **O**, the area occupancy can be increased and light can be received over a broader range.

As illustrated in FIGS. **8A** to **8C**, the optical element **112** has the width **W1**, the height **H1**, and the radius of curvature **R1** at the position **P1**, and has the width **W2**, the height **H2**, and the radius of curvature **R2** at the position **P2**. When  $W1 > W2$ ,  $H1 > H2$ , and  $R1 < R2$  are satisfied, the optical element **112** provides higher light collecting performance and higher area occupancy compared to those in the structure of the related art, and the light collection efficiency can be increased.

The optical elements of each embodiment can be formed by, for example, photolithography. In this case, desired optical elements can be obtained by subjecting photoresist to exposure in an exposure device by using an area gradation mask or a gray tone mask having a transmittance determined from the design data of the shape of the optical elements, and then performing development. In addition, heat treatment for deforming the shape of the photoresist can be additionally performed. An optical element array according to any of the above-described embodiments manufactured by the above-described method may have a shape that differs from the shape defined by the design data due to diffraction of light in the exposure process or the influence of the heat treatment.

The shape of an optical element array according to any of the embodiments that has been manufactured will be described with reference to FIG. **9**. FIG. **9** is a diagram illustrating a shape **941** that corresponds to the shape of the cross section **211** of the optical element **111** illustrated in FIG. **2A**. In FIG. **9**, components that are the same as those in FIG. **2A** are denoted by the same reference numerals, and explanations thereof are thus omitted. The manufactured optical element **111** may include extending portions **901** which are in contact with a bottom surface **200** and spread from the bottom surface **200**. The spreading of the portions that are in contact with the bottom surface **200** may occur in any of the optical elements in any region. When the widths and gaps are actually measured, a plane **900** that is parallel to the bottom surface **200** may be set at a position where the height is 1% of the largest height **H4** of any optical element **111**, and the shape of each optical element on the plane **900** may be measured. Also when the adjacent optical elements are in contact with each other and it is difficult to determine the shapes of thereof, distances, etc., on the plane **900** may be measured.

Examples of methods for measuring the shapes include a method of measuring the surface of the optical element array with an AFM or the like and a method for measuring a cross section of the optical element array with an SEM or the like.

The above-described embodiments may be applied to an image pickup system, such as a camera. The concept of the

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image pickup system is not limited to an apparatus which is used mainly to perform a shooting operation, and also includes an apparatus having a shooting function as an auxiliary function (for example, a personal computer or a mobile device). The image pickup system includes a photoelectric conversion apparatus according to any of the above-described embodiments of the present invention, and a signal processing unit for processing signals output from the photoelectric conversion apparatus. This signal processing unit includes, for example, an A/D converter and a processor for processing digital data output from the A/D converter.

While the present invention has been described with reference to exemplary embodiments, it is to be understood that the invention is not limited to the disclosed exemplary embodiments. The scope of the following claims is to be accorded the broadest interpretation so as to encompass all such modifications and equivalent structures and functions.

This application claims the benefit of Japanese Patent Application No. 2013-212298 filed Oct. 9, 2013, which is hereby incorporated by reference herein in its entirety.

What is claimed is:

1. An optical element array comprising:

a plurality of optical elements including at least a first optical element and a second optical element located on a same plane,

wherein the first optical element is located at a center of an array region, which is a region on the same plane in which the optical elements are arranged,

the second optical element is further from the center of the array region than the first optical element,

an orthogonal projection of the first optical element on the plane includes a first end and a second end located closer to the second optical element than the first end and located on a first straight line that passes through the first end and the center of the array region,

an orthogonal projection of a vertex of the first optical element on the plane is equally spaced from the first end and the second end and located at a first position on the first straight line,

an orthogonal projection of the second optical element on the plane includes a third end that is located on the first straight line and a fourth end that is located on the first straight line and that is further from the center of the array region than the third end is,

an orthogonal projection of a vertex of the second optical element on the plane is located at a second position on the first straight line,

an interval between the third end and the second position is smaller than an interval between the first end and the first position, and is also smaller than an interval between the fourth end and the second position,

in a cross section of the first optical element, the cross section being perpendicular to the plane and including the first straight line, the first optical element includes a first outer edge that extends from the vertex of the first optical element to the second end,

in a cross section of the second optical element, the cross section being perpendicular to the plane and including the first straight line, the second optical element includes a second outer edge that extends from the vertex of the second optical element to the fourth end, and

a radius of curvature of the second outer edge or a median value of the radius of curvature of the second outer edge is greater than or equal to 80% and less than or equal to 120% of a radius of curvature of the first outer edge or a median value of the radius of curvature of the first outer edge.

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2. The optical element array according to claim 1, wherein an interval between the third end and the fourth end is smaller than an interval between the first end and the second end.

3. The optical element array according to claim 1, wherein the second optical element has a shape that is symmetric about the cross section.

4. The optical element array according to claim 1, wherein the optical elements further comprise a third optical element located further from the center of the array region than the second optical element along the first straight line,

an orthogonal projection of the third optical element on the plane includes a fifth end that is located on the first straight line and a sixth end that is located on the first straight line and that is further from the center of the array region than the fifth end is,

an orthogonal projection of a vertex of the third optical element on the plane is located at a third position on the first straight line,

an interval between the fifth end and the third position is smaller than the interval between the third end and the second position,

in a cross section of the third optical element, the cross section being perpendicular to the plane and including the first straight line, the third optical element includes a third outer edge that extends from the vertex of the third optical element to the sixth end, and

a radius of curvature of the third outer edge or a median value of the radius of curvature of the third outer edge is greater than or equal to 80% and less than or equal to 120% of the radius of curvature of the second outer edge or greater than or equal to 80% and less than or equal to 120% of the median value of the radius of curvature of the second outer edge.

5. The optical element array according to claim 4, wherein the optical elements further comprise a fourth optical element adjacent to the first optical element along the first straight line, a fifth optical element adjacent to the second optical element along the first straight line, and a sixth optical element adjacent to the third optical element along the first straight line,

wherein an interval between the second optical element and the fifth optical element is greater than an interval between the first optical element and the fourth optical element, and

an interval between the third optical element and the sixth optical element is greater than the interval between the second optical element and the fifth optical element.

6. The optical element array according to claim 4, wherein an interval between the fifth end and the sixth end is smaller than an interval between the third end and the fourth end.

7. The optical element array according to claim 1, wherein the optical element array includes a first region in which a plurality of first optical elements are arranged and a second region in which a plurality of second optical elements are arranged.

8. The optical element array according to claim 1, wherein the orthogonal projection of the second optical element on the plane has a first width along a second straight line at a fourth position located on the first straight line in the second optical element, the second straight line being located on the plane and perpendicular to the first straight line, and a second width along the second straight line at a fifth position on the first straight line in the second optical element, the fifth position being located further away from the center of the array region than the fourth position is, the second width being smaller than the first width,

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in a first cross section of the second optical element, the first cross section being perpendicular to the plane and including the first width, the second optical element has a first radius of curvature and a first largest height,

in a second cross section of the second optical element, the second cross section being perpendicular to the plane and including the second width, the second optical element has a second radius of curvature and a second largest height, and

the second radius of curvature is greater than the first radius of curvature, and the second largest height is smaller than the first largest height.

9. The optical element array according to claim 1, wherein the orthogonal projection of the second optical element on the plane has a first width along a second straight line at a fourth position located on the first straight line in the second optical element, the second straight line being located on the plane and perpendicular to the first straight line, and a second width along the second straight line at a fifth position on the first straight line in the second optical element, the fifth position being located further away from the center of the array region than the fourth position is, the second width being smaller than the first width,

in a first cross section of the second optical element, the first cross section being perpendicular to the plane and including the first width, the second optical element has a first largest height,

in a second cross section of the second optical element, the second cross section being perpendicular to the plane and including the second width, the second optical element has a second largest height, and

the second height is smaller than the first height, and the fifth position is located on an outer edge of the orthogonal projection of the second optical element on the plane.

10. A photoelectric conversion apparatus comprising:

the optical element array according to claim 1; and

a semiconductor substrate including a first photoelectric conversion element that is provided so as to correspond to the first optical element and a second photoelectric conversion element that is provided so as to correspond to the second optical element.

11. The photoelectric conversion apparatus according to claim 10,

wherein the first photoelectric conversion element forms a first pixel and the second photoelectric conversion element forms a second pixel,

orthogonal projections of the first pixel and the second pixel on the plane include rectangular regions having respective centers,

the orthogonal projections of the first optical element and the second optical element have respective centers, and in the orthogonal projections of the first pixel, the second pixel, the first optical element, and the second optical element on the plane, the center of the second optical element and the center of the rectangular region of the second pixel are arranged along the first straight line, and the center of the second optical element is displaced from the center of the rectangular region of the second pixel toward the center of the array region by a first length.

12. An image pickup system comprising:

the photoelectric conversion apparatus according to claim 10; and

a signal processing unit that processes a signal from the photoelectric conversion apparatus.

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13. An optical element array comprising:  
 a plurality of optical elements including at least a first  
 optical element and a second optical element located on  
 a same plane,  
 wherein the second optical element is further from a center 5  
 of an array region, which is a region on the same plane in  
 which the optical elements are arranged, than the first  
 optical element,  
 an orthogonal projection of the first optical element on the  
 plane includes a first end and a second end located fur- 10  
 ther from the center of the array region than the first end  
 is and located on a first straight line that passes through  
 the first end and the center of the array region,  
 an orthogonal projection of a vertex of the first optical 15  
 element on the plane is located at a first position on the  
 first straight line,  
 an orthogonal projection of the second optical element on  
 the plane includes a third end that is located on the first  
 straight line and a fourth end that is located on the first 20  
 straight line and that is further from the center of the  
 array region than the third end is,  
 an orthogonal projection of a vertex of the second optical  
 element on the plane is located at a second position on  
 the first straight line,  
 an interval between the third end and the second position is 25  
 smaller than an interval between the first end and the first  
 position, and is also smaller than an interval between the  
 fourth end and the second position,  
 in a cross section of the first optical element, the cross  
 section being perpendicular to the plane and including 30  
 the first straight line, the first optical element includes a  
 first outer edge that extends from the vertex of the first  
 optical element to the second end,  
 in a cross section of the second optical element, the cross  
 section being perpendicular to the plane and including 35  
 the first straight line, the second optical element includes  
 a second outer edge that extends from the vertex of the  
 second optical element to the fourth end, and  
 a radius of curvature of the second outer edge or a median  
 value of the radius of curvature of the second outer edge 40  
 is greater than or equal to 80% and less than or equal to  
 120% of a radius of curvature of the first outer edge or  
 greater than or equal to 80% and less than or equal to  
 120% of a median value of the radius of curvature of the  
 first outer edge. 45

14. The optical element array according to claim 13,  
 wherein an interval between the third end and the fourth end  
 is smaller than an interval between the first end and the second  
 end.

15. The optical element array according to claim 13, 50  
 wherein the second optical element has a shape that is sym-  
 metric about the cross section.

16. The optical element array according to claim 13,  
 wherein the optical elements further comprise a third optical  
 element located further from the center of the array region 55  
 than the second optical element along the first straight line,

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an orthogonal projection of the third optical element on the  
 plane includes a fifth end that is located on the first  
 straight line and a sixth end that is located on the first  
 straight line and that is further from the center of the  
 array region than the fifth end is,  
 an orthogonal projection of a vertex of the third optical  
 element on the plane is located at a third position on the  
 first straight line,  
 an interval between the fifth end and the third position is  
 smaller than the interval between the third end and the  
 second position,  
 in a cross section of the third optical element, the cross  
 section being perpendicular to the plane and including  
 the first straight line, the third optical element includes a  
 third outer edge that extends from the vertex of the third  
 optical element to the sixth end, and  
 a radius of curvature of the third outer edge or a median  
 value of the radius of curvature of the third outer edge is  
 greater than or equal to 80% and less than or equal to  
 120% of the radius of curvature of the second outer edge  
 or greater than or equal to 80% and less than or equal to  
 120% of the median value of the radius of curvature of  
 the second outer edge.

17. The optical element array according to claim 16,  
 wherein the optical elements further comprise a fourth optical  
 element adjacent to the first optical element along the first  
 straight line, a fifth optical element adjacent to the second  
 optical element along the first straight line, and a sixth optical  
 element adjacent to the third optical element along the first  
 straight line,  
 wherein an interval between the second optical element  
 and the fifth optical element is greater than an interval  
 between the first optical element and the fourth optical  
 element, and  
 an interval between the third optical element and the sixth  
 optical element is greater than the interval between the  
 second optical element and the fifth optical element.

18. The optical element array according to claim 16,  
 wherein an interval between the fifth end and the sixth end is  
 smaller than an interval between the third end and the fourth  
 end.

19. A photoelectric conversion apparatus comprising:  
 the optical element array according to claim 13; and  
 a semiconductor substrate including a first photoelectric  
 conversion element that is provided so as to correspond  
 to the first optical element and a second photoelectric  
 conversion element that is provided so as to correspond  
 to the second optical element.

20. An image pickup system comprising:  
 the photoelectric conversion apparatus according to claim  
 13; and  
 a signal processing unit that processes a signal from the  
 photoelectric conversion apparatus.

\* \* \* \* \*